

Joel Atwood House
Bound Brook Island Road
Wellfleet
Barnstable County
Massachusetts

HABS No. MA-772

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1-WEL,
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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D. C. 20240

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

JOEL ATWOOD HOUSE

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Location North side of Bound Brook Island Road, on Bound Brook Island area in Town of Wellfleet, Barnstable County, Massachusetts.

Present owner Mr. John H. Hall, 252 East 60th St., New York, 22, N.Y.

Present occupant John H. Hall and family.

Present use Summer residence.

Significance This is a frame Cape Cod "double house" of very early construction. It can be dated early 18th century and possibly earlier. The owner however found only a shell, and has completely re-modeled the interior. The exterior retains the character of the early houses of this type which were built in this general area of Cape Cod.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Original and subsequent owners The present owner believes that Joel Atwood was the builder and first owner. The house remained in the Atwood family for some time. This was one of the early families on Cape Cod and one which figured prominently in the development of the Towns of Wellfleet and Truro. Mrs. Arthur Atwood, daughter in law of Henry Atwood sold the property to a Mrs. Wood who in turn sold it to the present owner in 1953.

Date of erection This house, from its appearance can be dated between 1700 and 1730. The present owner, an industrial designer and former contractor in this area on the Cape, and who has a good knowledge of Cape Cod houses, thinks the house was built before 1730.

Mr. George Higgins, local historian and real estate appraiser in the Boston area, and who has restored his own house near the Hall house (he has been on this project since 1919), has also seen this house, and his opinion of the date of the house is 1690.

Architect Unknown.

Builder Present owner thinks Joel Atwood was the builder and first owner.

Original plans None known to exist.

Alterations and additions Interior was completely altered by present owner, partitions were removed between east front room and rooms back of it, making one large L shaped living room. Modern kitchen ell has been added to rear. Second floor has been altered.

Historical events connected with structure None of importance have been discovered.

Important old views None are known to date.

Sources of information Present owner; Mr. George Higgins, Wellfleet, Mass.

Likely sources not yet investigated Wellfleet Town Records; Barnstable County records, although a fire in the Court House in 1827 destroyed many of the records prior to that date, including many of the original Register of Deeds books for this County.

Prepared by


Charles S. Dotts, Architect

HABS Cape Cod Survey I
Aug. 1, 1960.

Bound Brook Island Road, Wellfleet, Massachusetts

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

GENERAL STATEMENT

Architectural interest and merit This Cape Cod "double house" is one of the earliest houses in the Towns of Wellfleet and Truro. Only the exterior of the original house is of value, and it can be dated early 18th century type. The property is within the area of the proposed Cape Cod National Seashore.

THE EXTERIOR

Overall dimensions Original house: 28' x 32'.

Foundations Brick.

Wall construction Heavy corner posts, sills and girts. No wall studs. Vertical plank frame construction with shingled sides, and clapboard front. Tapered "gun stock" corner posts are observed. These are exposed in the front west room.

Porches, stoops Semi-circular stone step at main entrance.

Chimneys One brick chimney over the central part of the house, rebuilt by present owner.

Openings - doorways and doors 5 panel front and rear doors, with 5 light transoms.

windows and shutters 9/6 6 x 8 panes in wood double hung sash, very early type, first floor. 6/6 panes in d. h. sash second floor.

Roof - shape, covering Gabled, pitched, wood shingles.

cornice, eaves wood box cornice; narrow eaves.

dormers None.

THE INTERIOR

Floor plans This Cape Cod "double house" had a central south entrance flanked by two windowed rooms on the east and west, as seen in other Cape Cod "double houses". The entrance and the two rooms remain. Stairs to the second floor run from the entry. The partition between the east room and the original kitchen, buttery, and small bed room have been removed and the east room and this area is one large L shaped living room. The north wall of the original kitchen

has been converted into a ceiling to floor glass wall. A modern kitchen ell running north and south was added to the north west corner of the house by Mrs. Wood, a former owner.

The second floor of the house has been rebuilt by the present owner and consists of two large bed rooms and a bath.

Stairways One, at the center front entrance way, narrow, steep.

Flooring Refloored with random width pine on first floor. Second floor has apparently the original random width pine flooring.

Wall and ceiling finish Present owner has refinished all walls.

Doorways and doors All have been replaced by present owner.

Trim Ditto.

Hardware Modern.

Lighting Electric.

Heating Coleman forced air furnace, wall ducts. East room fireplace and original kitchen fireplace, and west room front, fireplace are useable, but new fireplace wall paneling has been installed.

SITE

Orientation This property is on the north side of the road, on the lee side of a hill, partly hidden from the road because of the trees and shrubbery. The area is well landscaped and very neat.


Enclosures Post and rail fence between west lawn and driveway.

Outbuildings A garage near the road has been converted into a studio for Mrs. Hall, an artist.

Walks, driveways. Gravel drive to the west yard. Stepping stones are located west of the house. A brick terrace is located north east of the old kitchen.

Landscaping. The shrubbery, trees and lawn are well kept and present a very neat appearance.

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